

What Is The Child Care Assistance Program?

The Child Care Assistance program in Missouri provides assistance with payment for child care on a sliding fee basis for eligible parents/guardians. The purpose of the Child Care Assistance program is to enable families to gain employment and remain employed.

Can I Receive Child Care Assistance?

If you need child care because you have a child under age thirteen, or age thirteen or older with a special need, **and:**

- are working;
- attend school;
- are in job training;
- are disabled;
- are being evaluated for training and/or employment; and/or
- have a child with special needs,

you may contact your local Division of Family Services (DFS) office to apply for Child Care Assistance.

Who Provides Eligible Care?

Depending on your child care needs and eligibility, care may be provided by:

- a licensed provider;
- a license exempt provider inspected and in compliance with the Department of Health Regulations; or

- a provider registered with DFS and who is caring for four or less unrelated children. A background screening must be completed before becoming eligible to be registered and receive payment.

If you require help in locating a child care provider, your child care worker can assist you, or you may call the Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network at: **1-800-200-9017**.

How Much Will DFS Assist With Payments?

DFS provides assistance with child care through payment of full or partial costs. Eligibility for Child Care assistance is based upon the following: Reason care is needed, the family's gross monthly income (less health insurance premiums) and the family size.

There is a maximum amount that may be paid to a provider for each day of care provided. This is referred to as the "state rate". This amount varies depending on where you live in Missouri.

The "sliding fee" is the portion of the "state rate" that the parents/guardians pay based on the family's income before taxes (less health insurance premiums) and the family size. The parents/guardians are responsible for payment of the "sliding fee" to the child care provider.

If the child care provider charges more than the "state rate" for that area, the difference between the provider rate and the state rate is called a "co-payment". The parents/guardians are responsible for paying any "co-payment".

Ask your child care worker for information on the "state rate" for your area and the "sliding fee" scale.

How Is The Child Care Provider Paid?

Child care providers usually receive payment directly from DFS for payment of the "state rate", less any sliding fee. Parents/guardians are responsible for paying the "sliding fee" and any "co-payment" charged by the child care provider. If the child care provider you select wishes to receive payment directly from DFS, notify your child care worker when completing the application.

Some child care providers do not accept payment directly from DFS. The parents/guardians submit receipts (signed by the child care provider) to DFS and are reimbursed for the "state rate" less any "sliding fee".

How Often Do I Apply?

Your approval letter will tell you when your eligibility for Child Care Assistance will begin and when your eligibility will end. **You must reapply for Child Care Assistance during the last month of your eligibility in order for your services to continue without interruption.** To reapply, contact your child care worker thirty (30) days before your eligibility end date. You must cooperate with the child care worker in determining your continued eligibility.

What Are My Hearing Rights?

If you have applied for or are receiving Child Care Assistance and:

- the county office refuses to take your application, or takes your application but decides you are not eligible and you think you are;
- you think your sliding fee is wrong;
- the county office does not act promptly on your request for help; or
- you disagree with any action taken on your Child Care case,

you may request a hearing in person, by mail, or by phone. You have ninety (90) days from the date of action to request a hearing.

When you disagree with any action taken or to be taken by the county office that directly affects you, you may arrange a conference with your child care worker

and his/her supervisor to help resolve any misunderstandings. This neither takes the place of nor prevents a state hearing.

What If I Am Discriminated Against?

If you feel you were discriminated against in the handling of a child care matter because of age, race, color, handicap, sex, religious creed, national origin, or political beliefs, you may file a complaint under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the:

Office for Civil Rights, DSS
Broadway State Office Building, 3rd floor
PO Box 1527
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1527

or the

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
601 E 12th Street, Room 248
Kansas City, MO 64106

or both the state and federal agencies.



Missouri Department of Social Services
Division of Family Services
P.O. Box 88
Jefferson City, MO 65103-0088

www.dss.state.mo.us/dfs

TDD: 800-735-2966
VOICE: 800-735-2466

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Information about the

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



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employment and remain employed.*